# LEWISTON YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (LYAC)

#### NAME & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The official name of the City of Lewiston youth council shall be the "Lewiston Youth Advisory Council" (LYAC). The LYAC, established in July 2002, shall serve as an advisory council to the Lewiston City Council in regards to community issues affecting youth and shall serve as a liaison between the youth of the community and the City. The LYAC shall enable youth to work toward goals that empower all of the community's youth and to undertake service projects that enhance the community.

#### **COMPOSITION**

The LYAC shall annually have a composition of 15 voting high school aged members chosen through an application/selection process. A youth must be a resident of Lewiston and a high school student or home schooled student (State of Maine approved curriculum) in grades 9-12 or, at the time of application, an 8th grade student who will be entering grade 9 in the following academic year.

The LYAC shall be facilitated by two Lewiston employees serving as "Co-Advisors", and the Co-Advisors shall be appointed by the City Administrator.

The LYAC shall also have one (1) ex-officio city councilor annually appointed by the Lewiston City Council.

#### MEETING SCHEDULE

During the K-12 academic school year [unless consensus is to meet during summer months (Article VII, Section 2)], a regular meeting of the LYAC shall take place a minimum of once a month on a day of the week and time agreed upon by LYAC members and the Co-Advisors. Special meetings shall be called if business at hand requires additional meetings.

#### LYAC PROCEDURES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All information pertaining to the procedures and responsibilities of the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council are found in the by-laws that are incorporated herewith.

#### PARTICIPATION AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

#### **PURPOSE**

The idea of a revolving seat on the Lewiston City Council for members of the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) is being proposed to provide them with an opportunity for further engagement in local municipal government. Their participation will also provide elected officials and members of the public with youth perspectives on topics being discussed.

### REPRESENTATION

The youth joining the City Council for a particular meeting will have the opportunity to do so due to membership on the youth council; however, the views and opinions youth share will be regarded as their own and are not to be interpreted as the position of the Lewiston Youth Advisory

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Council. Either the Mayor or City Council President will make that clarification at the beginning of each City Council meeting in which an LYAC member participates per this policy.

The idea of a youth revolving seat shall be reviewed every two years by incoming City Council members. It will be their total discretion as to whether the revolving seat continues or is reinstated if previously stopped.

#### **ROTATION PROCESS**

Participation by an LYAC member is voluntary—not mandatory, as only those LYAC members who wish to participate shall do so.

A list of members who wish to participate will be maintained by LYAC Co-Advisors, and the order of the list will first consist of high school seniors (listed alphabetically), and then the remaining names will also be listed in alphabetical order. The reason for first utilizing the seniors is due to them being in their last year with the youth council through which this opportunity is being provided.

As one person serves, the next person on the list will be invited to participate at the next City Council meeting. If that person is unable to serve at the current time, the next person on the list will be approached. The person who was unable to serve will have his/her name placed at the end of the current rotation before the next full rotation of participants begins.

There shall be an understanding that youth might not be available for some meetings due to the unexpected scheduling of a City Council meeting or conflicts with school and/or extracurricular activities.

The City Clerk will be made aware of which youth will be serving at the next meeting on the Wednesday prior to the scheduled meeting.

Prior to an upcoming meeting, the young person who will be engaged in a particular City Council meeting will electronically receive the City Council agenda material.

#### **PARTICIPATION**

Youth will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and participate in City Council discussions in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*. Youth will not be voting members of the City Council, and youth will not participate in executive sessions due to the nature of confidentiality associated with such sessions. Those LYAC members who participate with the City Council shall be youth who are actively participating in LYAC and in good standing with the group. For each meeting, youth will be asked to wear their LYAC shirt and will sit next to the Council's representative to LYAC.

To be prepared for City Council discussions, the youth scheduled for each meeting shall thoroughly review agenda materials prior to arrival. In addition, each youth is expected to arrive on time and to be respectful to elected officials, members of the public, and staff. LYAC youth will participate at City Council meetings until 9 p.m. At that time, they may be excused so as not to interfere with assigned homework for the following school day. The 9 p.m. time would not apply at summer City Council meetings when school is not in session.

# **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The official name of the City of Lewiston youth council shall be the "Lewiston Youth Advisory Council" (LYAC).

#### **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The LYAC shall serve as an advisory council to the Lewiston City Council in regards to community issues affecting youth and shall serve as a liaison between the youth of the community and the City. The LYAC shall enable youth to work toward goals that empower all of the community's youth and to undertake service projects that enhance the community.

#### ARTICLE III - ADVISORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

#### **Section 1. Co-Advisors**

The LYAC shall be facilitated by two Lewiston employees serving as "Co-Advisors", and the Co-Advisors shall be appointed by the City Administrator.

## **Section 2. Administrative Support**

Administrative support shall be provided to the youth council by the Co-Advisors for purposes of guidance relating to LYAC administrative issues.

### Section 3. Vacancy of Co-Advisor

The City Administrator shall be responsible for filling a vacancy of one or both of the Co-Advisors whenever such a vacancy occurs.

### ARTICLE IV - APPLICATION AND SELECTION

### **Section 1. Qualification**

To be considered for membership on the LYAC, an individual must be a Lewiston resident and a high school student/home schooled student (grades 9-12) or, at the time of application, an 8th grade student who will be entering grade 9 in the following academic year.

#### Section 2. Selection Criteria

Selection criteria shall not be based on popularity, grades, student activities, or such. Students shall be chosen to serve by the Selection Committee (Article IV, Section 6) based on their willingness to serve, ability to interact with others, and ability to be a youth leader.

## **Section 3. Application Process**

Each April, the application process for membership on the LYAC shall be made public. Applications shall be available to all Lewiston residents currently in a high school system or entering a high school system in the following academic year (grades 8-12) through promotional efforts by the sitting LYAC, Co-Advisors, and the City Administrator's Office. These promotional efforts may include, but are not limited to, an assembly at Lewiston Middle School, posted flyers, media notification, and mailings. Application forms shall be released, completed by applicants, and returned to specified locations no later than the second Friday in May.

# **Section 4. Application Content**

The application shall include:

- a. Information regarding due date and return location
- b. Section requesting name, grade, school or home school affiliation, home address, phone number, e-mail address, and parental contact information
- c. Section requesting signatures of two (2) adult community members
- d. Section requesting signatures of fifteen (15) peers that may include friends, neighbors, and classmates
- e. Open response question "Why do you want to serve on the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council?" In addition to answering the question, a student may also include other information that may be helpful to the Selection Committee when making a decision about a youth's ability to serve.
- f. A "Commitment to Serve" statement for signature by the applicant which shall read, "If selected to serve on the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council, I agree to work in a spirit of teamwork with my fellow peers, the LYAC Co-Advisors, other members of the LYAC, municipal officials, municipal staff, and community members with the understanding that I have been provided with a unique opportunity to represent my peers in a positive light and effectively contribute on behalf of all youth within our community."

#### **Section 5. Interviews**

Each applicant shall be contacted within two weeks of submittal of an application for the purpose of scheduling an interview. In an effort to assess leadership qualities and communication skills, the Selection Committee (Article IV, Section 6) shall interview applicants in small groups. Interviews may be videotaped if all applicants within a group give consent. The taped interviews shall be a reference tool for the Selection Committee when deciding upon who will serve on the youth advisory council.

## Section 6. Composition & Duties of Selection Committee

A Selection Committee shall be assembled once a year to choose the new LYAC. This committee shall consist of the Co-Advisors; possible representation from the Mayor/Council; and any member of the municipal staff, member of the community, or member of the local school system that the Co-Advisors may deem appropriate. This committee shall be responsible for reviewing all applications, conducting interviews, and appointing up to fifteen (15) capable youth that best stand out among applicants,

thereby best fitting the selection criteria as noted in Article IV, Section 2. The LYAC Selection Committee shall be responsible for submitting a finalized list of LYAC members to the City Administrator by no later than the last Friday in June. Follow-up contact will thereafter occur informing applicants of the group selected.

## Section 7. Appointment of LYAC Members

Selected youth will be appointed at a City Council meeting in July. Orientation/training shall occur during the summer months (July or August). The first LYAC meeting of the new year shall be held in September unless consensus of the standing LYAC is to hold regular meetings during the summer months, following orientation/training.

### ARTICLE V - ORGANIZATION OF LYAC

## **Section 1. Composition of LYAC**

Composition of the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council shall be as follows:

- a. Up to fifteen (15) high school aged voting members appointed by the LYAC Selection Committee
- b. One (1) ex-officio city councilor annually appointed by the Lewiston City Council

## **Section 2. LYAC Membership**

The Lewiston Youth Advisory Council's membership shall be Lewiston residents who are or will be high school aged students at the beginning of the following school year, enrolled in school or home schooled utilizing a State of Maine approved curriculum.

#### **Section 3. Subcommittees**

- a. At any time, the LYAC reserves the right to create a LYAC subcommittee in order to address a particular issue or issues pertaining to local youth.
- b. The officers (Article VI, Section 2) of the LYAC, in consultation with the Co-Advisors, shall appoint members to subcommittees. Subcommittee membership may not exceed seven (7) members and shall hold public meetings. The LYAC Chair shall appoint a subcommittee chair from among the voting membership of the LYAC, with acceptance by a simple majority vote of the LYAC.
- c. Membership of subcommittees shall not be limited to voting LYAC members and may consist of any individual who has an interest in a particular youth advisory council issue. All subcommittee members may vote on issues at subcommittee meetings, regardless of LYAC member-ship. These votes, however, shall not be binding upon the LYAC. The LYAC membership shall have the final word on recommendations from subcommittees.

- d. Subcommittee chairs are solely responsible to report findings to the LYAC or any other group that may request information of a subcommittee. Subcommittee chairs shall also be responsible for ensuring that subcommittees address forwarded issues in a timely manner.
- e. Subcommittee chairs shall set meeting times based upon a consensus of subcommittee member preferences.

## **Section 4. Standing Subcommittees**

Any permanent or semi-permanent subcommittee created by act of any LYAC must be observed by succeeding LYAC groups. Record must be maintained of all past and current subcommittees for historical reference. As subcommittee chair vacancies occur, the elected Chair of the LYAC is responsible for filling those vacancies. These Chair nominations must be accepted by a simple majority vote of the LYAC.

### **Section 5. Discontinuation of Subcommittees**

A subcommittee created by act of the LYAC may be discontinued at any time by a simple majority vote of LYAC membership. The discontinuation of a subcommittee shall be recorded in the LYAC record by a strike through the committee and the date the subcommittee was discontinued.

### Section 6. LYAC Term of Service

- a. LYAC members shall be appointed for service in July of each year with a one-year appointment expiring the day the succeeding youth advisory council is installed.
- b. LYAC members may apply for an unlimited number of terms as long as they submit an application for a new term meet membership criteria (Article V, Section 2).

## Section 7. LYAC Attendance

- a. Members of the LYAC shall adhere to a strict attendance policy.
- b. Three (3) unexcused absences from Lewiston Youth Advisory Council meetings shall be considered as a resignation. An unexcused absence is one in which the member does not inform an officer or one of the Co-Advisors of his or her need to be absent from a meeting. Once a resignation occurs, the seat is automatically vacated, and proper steps (Article V, Section 8) shall be taken to fill a vacancy.

### **Section 8. LYAC Non-Officer Vacancy**

Non-officer vacancies that occur within a LYAC term shall be filled by consideration of a recommendation presented by the sitting LYAC or Co-Advisors and confirmation vote of the sitting LYAC. Confirmation shall be a simple majority vote of the LYAC as the first order of business at the next regularly scheduled LYAC meeting, with the new member's(s') tenure taking effect immediately.

### **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS & DUTIES**

## Section 1. Officers of the Youth Advisory Council

The officers of the Youth Advisory Council shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. These positions shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the LYAC.

### **Section 2. Descriptions of Offices**

#### a. Chair:

The LYAC Chair shall set agendas and preside over all meetings of the LYAC. The Chair shall work with the Secretary to assemble any youth council distributions and to ensure they are delivered in a manner conductive to municipal courier distribution schedules. The Chair shall delegate responsibilities to LYAC membership. The Chair shall report to the City Council at least once per month in regards to LYAC activities. The Chair may also convene special meetings of the LYAC to address immediate concerns. The Chair shall interact with the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, and Co-Advisors as needed to set goals for the LYAC. In addition, the individuals named above may call upon the Chair to represent the LYAC at municipal functions. The Chair is also responsible for signing any official correspondence of the LYAC.

### b. Vice-Chair:

The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in his or her duties and advise the Chair of any agenda and subcommittee concerns. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall assume his or her responsibilities, **OR**, when called upon by the Chair, Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, Co-Advisors, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair. Upon the resignation or dismissal of a Chair, the Vice-Chair immediately assumes the office of Chair.

# c. Secretary:

The Secretary of the LYAC shall be responsible for processing minutes and maintaining documentation related to the LYAC. The Secretary shall work with the Chair in assembling LYAC materials for any necessary distributions in a timely manner. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining any needed LYAC communication links, including phone information, e-mail information, and correspondence distribution information. The Secretary may utilize the guidance of the Co-Advisors for administrative support but shall be responsible for fulfilling his or her own requirements, although he or she may enlist the assistance of other officers if

necessary. Minutes from the last LYAC meeting shall be reviewed at the start of the next LYAC meeting.

#### d. Treasurer:

The Treasurer of the LYAC, in consultation with the Co-Advisors, shall maintain proper budgetary processes, facilitate any needed fund raising activities, and submit budget requests to the Mayor & Council and City Administrator when necessary. The Treasurer shall also serve as an aide to the other LYAC officers.

# **Section 3. Officer Vacancy**

Upon the resignation or vacancy of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall immediately assume his or her duties. Upon the resignation or vacancy of any other officer, the sitting Chair shall immediately declare a seven (7) day nomination period. Nominations for officer replacement shall be forwarded to the Chair during this time. A list of confirmed nominees shall be forwarded to the LYAC membership within twenty-four (24) hours of the end of nomination. Election of a replacement shall be the first order of business at the next regularly scheduled LYAC meeting thereafter, with the nominee receiving the most votes, by secret ballot, being the newly elected officer. In the case of a tie in nominations, the selected name will be drawn at random, as the Chair already has the right to vote and is therefore unable to break such tie. Following the voting process, the newly elected officer's tenure shall take effect immediately.

### **Section 4. New Session Procedure**

One or both of the Co-Advisors shall conduct the first meeting of every new LYAC session with the nomination process for officers (Article VI, Section 5) as the first order of business. The next scheduled meeting shall have the Advisory Panel conducting officer elections as the first order of business, with new officers taking their seats immediately. Annually, the Co-Advisors shall be responsible for the agendas of the first two meetings of the LYAC. The LYAC officers thereafter shall run every meeting.

### **Section 5. New Officer Nomination Procedures**

At the first official LYAC meeting of the year, one or both of the Co-Advisors shall be responsible for explaining the descriptions of offices as outlined in Article VI, Section 4, as well as facilitating the nomination process. One or both of the Co-Advisors shall ask for nominations at the first meeting. After these nominations are made, one or both of the Co-Advisors shall inform the youth advisory council that nominations can be made to one of the Co-Advisors within seven (7) days in writing or by phone call. Once the nomination period of seven days ends, one of the Co-Advisors will be responsible for contacting nominees to verify willingness to vie for an officer seat. As soon as confirmation is made, one of the Co-Advisors will distribute the list of nominees to LYAC membership. The voting shall take place as the first order of business at the second LYAC meeting, with secret balloting administered by one or both of the Co-Advisors. In the event of a tie for a newly elected annual officer(s), the tie names will be put in a "hat," and that particular officer shall be selected through a

random drawing facilitated by one or both of the Co-Advisors. Elected officers shall be seated immediately.

### **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Section 1. Meeting Schedule**

During the K-12 academic school year [unless consensus is to meet during summer months (Article VII, Section 2)], a regular meeting of the LYAC shall take place a minimum of once a month on a day of the week and time agreed upon by LYAC members and the Co-Advisors, which shall remain as a consistent monthly schedule unless otherwise voted by LYAC. Special meetings shall be called if business at hand requires additional meetings. At least one of the Co-Advisors shall be present at each LYAC meeting.

### **Section 2. Summer Meetings**

The LYAC shall hold two orientation/training meetings in the summer (either in July or August). The purposes of these meetings shall be team building and procedural education. These meetings shall not be considered regular meetings, and, therefore, officer nomination shall not take place. Regular meetings shall be permissible in the summer months following the two summer orientation/training meetings if agreed to by a consensus of LYAC members, and regular business may then take place at such meetings. If no regular meetings are scheduled within the summer months, the regular LYAC meeting schedule will commence in September of each K-12 school year.

## **Section 3. Special Meetings**

A special LYAC meeting may be called at the request of the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, one or both of the Co-Advisors, or LYAC Chair. A quorum must be met to proceed with the meeting.

### **Section 4. Governing Procedure**

All meetings of the LYAC shall be open to the public at all times. *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all meetings, with one of the Co-Advisors serving as parliamentarian reference.

### **Section 5. LYAC Quorum**

To hold a meeting, a quorum, one more than one half of the active membership, shall be present. If a quorum is not achieved, no formal business may take place.

### **Section 6. Voting**

Members of the LYAC shall vote on all motions or actions before the LYAC. Members shall abstain from a vote when a conflict of interest arises. Conflict of interest shall be defined as referred to in the newest available *Robert's Rules of Order*, and any

subsequent editions, and Maine State Statutes.

### **Section 7. Information Process**

- a. The Secretary shall keep a public record, minutes, of each meeting.
- b. Successive secretaries shall maintain a public file of LYAC activity. This file shall contain the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council policy, by-laws, and any amendments; an updated subcommittee listing; and a collection of all acts/resolutions passed by the LYAC. During the summer months, one of the Co-Advisors shall possess the file for safekeeping.

### **Section 8. Commitment to Serve**

Members of the LYAC shall remain committed to the LYAC "Commitment to Serve" statement that he/she signed at the time of application, which states, "If selected to serve on the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council, I agree to work in a spirit of teamwork with my fellow peers, the LYAC Co-Advisors, other members of the LYAC, municipal officials, municipal staff, and community members with the understanding that I have been provided with a unique opportunity to represent my peers in a positive light and effectively contribute on behalf of all youth within our community."

### Section 9. Behavior

- a. As representatives of Lewiston youth, members of the LYAC shall strive to follow the "Commitment to Serve" (Article VII, Section 9) agreed to on the LYAC application. Thus, their behavior should reflect the integrity and accountability that the position merits. Acting in an inappropriate manner, whether it be at an LYAC meeting or during non-meeting time, may be just cause for dismissal.
- b. Upon the occurrence of an LYAC member acting in an inappropriate manner, the Co-Advisors shall jointly submit to the City Administrator a recommendation to address the behavior. The City Administrator shall reserve the final authority as to discipline of a LYAC member ranging from verbal warning to dismissal. Following the dismissal of a member, it is the responsibility of the Co-Advisors to present a new nominee to the LYAC Chair in a timely manner. The LYAC reserves the right to accept or reject the recommendation of the Co-Advisors and request a new nomination.

#### ARTICLE VIII - ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

### **Section 1. Adoption**

Upon a simple majority vote of the Lewiston City Council, these by-laws shall be the by-laws by which the LYAC abides. Any revisions to the by-laws by a two-thirds passage of the sitting LYAC, or by a subsequent LYAC, shall become effective only after a simple majority vote of the Lewiston City Council. Dates of all amendments

shall be so noted at the end of these by-laws.

### Section 2. Amendment

These by-laws may be amended with a two-thirds vote of the LYAC and a simple majority confirmation vote of the Lewiston City Council. A proposed change to the by-laws must be introduced in writing at a LYAC meeting at least ten (10) days before a vote on such an amendment(s) shall be taken.

#### Section 3. Informal Acts

The LYAC may create subcommittees; pass "advisory opinion" resolutions; make recommendations to the Lewiston City Council; select activities; or undertake appropriate expenditures of budgeted monies, the latter in consultation with the Co-Advisors. The youth advisory council shall, however, not proceed in any way that undermines or serves to inappropriately alter these by-laws or the laws and policies of the City of Lewiston or the State of Maine.

# Section 4. Adopt-A-Spot Beautification

Should a sitting LYAC vote to undertake a beautification Adopt-A-Spot or some kind of greenery nursery towards City beautification, each LYAC membership thereafter will continue maintenance of such areas.